

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested. Claims 2-6, 8-15, 17-19, 21-24 and 26-27 remain pending in the application. Claims 1, 7, 16 and 20 were previously canceled. By the foregoing amendment, claims 25 and 28-29 are canceled.

Applicant notes with appreciation the Examiner's indication on page 9 of the Office Action that claims 6, 9, 12 and 23 contain allowable subject matter. In addition, Applicants note the indication that claim 27 has been allowed.

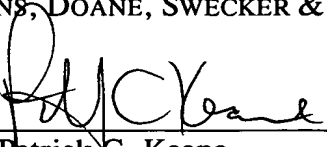
In an effort to expedite allowance of the present application, allowable claim 12 has been rewritten into independent form to include the features of independent claim 25. Independent claim 24 and 26, as well as the claims which depend therefrom, have been rewritten to depend from allowable claim 12. The sole pending independent claims are claims 12 and 27, both of which are indicated as allowable. The placement of the present application into condition for allowance does not constitute a waiver of Applicant's right to file a divisional application with respect to the canceled claims.

All rejections and objections raised in the Office Action having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance. However, should there be any remaining questions, it is respectfully requested that the undersigned be contacted at the number shown below.

Respectfully submitted,

BURNS, DOANE, SWECKER & MATHIS, L.L.P.

Date: May 26, 2004

By: 
Patrick C. Keane
Registration No. 32,858

P.O. Box 1404
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1404
(703) 836-6620